

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 FRB-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-07
TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 INT-05 NSC-05 GSA-02
NSF-01 ABF-01 /079 W
-----006267 301358Z /44

R 291932Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8515
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

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FRANKFURT FOR GAO

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD, EMIN, BE
SUBJECT: OVERLAP OF GAO AND EXECUTIVE BRANCH STUDIES OF
METALS INDUSTRY

REF: A) STATE 190945; B) STATE 203368

1. REF A ADVISED US OF GAO PLANS TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF
"COMPARATIVE INFORMATION AS TO WAYS FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS
ARE INFLUENCING INVESTMENT DECISIONS FOR MINING AND
MINERAL PROCESSING FACILITIES IN THE ALUMINUM, COPPER,
FERROALLOY AND ZINC INDUSTRIES" IN CONNECTION WITH A
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BROADER STUDY TITLED "ASSESSMENT OF THE INCREASING
RELIANCE OF US MANUFACTURERS ON FOREIGN PROCESSED
MATERIALS". REF B DIRECTED THE EMBASSY TO PROVIDE THE
DEPARTMENT WITH RESPONSES TO A WIDE-RANGING QUESTIONNAIRE
RELATING TO AN EXECUTIVE BRANCH STUDY OF "NONFUEL
MINERALS POLICY", COVERING 12 MINERALS, AMONG WHICH ARE
ALUMINUM, COPPER, IRON ORE AND SCRAP, AND ZINC.

2. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE POINTS OF DEPARTURE OF THE TWO STUDIES ARE NOT IDENTICAL AND THAT THERE IS SOME DIFFERENCE IN FOCUS BETWEEN THE TWO. HOWEVER, THEIR BASIC SIMILARITY, THEIR BROAD SCOPE, THE SENSITIVE NATURE OF MANY OF THE QUESTIONS, AND THE FACT THAT THE EMBASSY WOULD BE CALLED UPON TO CONTACT VIRTUALLY THE SAME SET OF BELGIAN OFFICIALS PRESENTS US WITH THE RISK THAT BY PURSUING THE TWO STUDIES SIMULTANEOUSLY, WE WOULD SEEM TO BE ABUSING OUR BELGIAN CONTACTS' PATIENCE AND GOOD WILL.

3. WE HAVE ALREADY BEGUN THE STUDY DIRECTED BY REF B, AND HAVE RECEIVED INITIAL RESPONSES THAT BETRAY SOME DEGREE OF SUSPICION--IF NOT OF RELUCTANCE TO COOPERATE-- THAT WE WILL HAVE TO TRY TO OVERCOME BY STRESSING THE BROAD MANDATE OF THE STUDY AND THE FACT THAT IT IS NOT DESIGNED TO BE USED TO BELGIUM'S DETRIMENT IN CONNECTION WITH TRADE RELATIONS. THE MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, WITHOUT REFUSING TO COOPERATE, HAS NEVERTHELESS SUGGESTED TO US THAT THE STUDY BE CONDUCTED AT THE EC LEVEL RATHER THAN AT THE MEMBER STATE LEVEL, AND OFFERED TO PROVIDE INFORMATION TO COMPLEMENT WHAT WE ARE ABLE TO GATHER FROM THE COMMISSION.

4. WE ALSO NOTE THAT REFS A AND B WERE SENT TO A DIFFERENT GROUP OF ADDRESSEES, THE ONLY OVERLAP BEING BRUSSELS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND BONN. ACCORDINGLY, WE WOULD LIKE TO PROPOSE THAT BRUSSELS BE EXEMPTED FROM THE GAO VISIT REQUESTED BY REF A, AND THAT IN ITS STEAD, WE UNDERTAKE TO PROVIDE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS POSED BY GAO FRANKFURT IN ITS AUGUST 22 LETTER ON THE SUBJECT IN OUR SUBMISSION TO THE DEPARTMENT ON THE NONFUEL MINERALS POLICY STUDY. WE BELIEVE THAT, GIVEN THE APPARENT BELGIAN HESITATION TO PROVIDE INFORMATION OF THIS SORT, WE STAND A BETTER CHANCE OF OBTAINING IT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH STUDY. CHAMBERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: METAL INDUSTRY, EXECUTIVE BRANCH, STUDIES, GAO AUDITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BRUSSE16490
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780354-0260
Format: TEL
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780810/aaaaaibt.tel
Line Count: 104
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ecb78457-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 190945, 78 STATE 203368
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1539149
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OVERLAP OF GAO AND EXECUTIVE BRANCH STUDIES OF METALS INDUSTRY
TAGS: ETRD, EMIN, BE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ecb78457-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014